

## Book Review

*Assessment of Toxic Agents at the Workplace: Roles of Ambient and Biological Monitoring.* A. BERLIN, R. E. YODAIKEN, and B. A. HENMAN. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Boston, 1984, 634 pp. \$98.50

This volume comprises proceedings of a seminar held in Luxembourg, December 8–12, 1980. Fourteen countries were represented in this seminar sponsored by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the United States and by the Commission of the European Communities, Health and Safety Directorate. There are 47 contributions on 21 topics, essentially all of which are in pairs, in one case quintupled, to elicit the multiple approaches and findings. The four discussions are very clearly edited “to eliminate undue repetition” and to improve readability. A summary report has been published elsewhere [Int. Arch. Occup. Environ. Health 50: 197–207 (1982)]. The mailing addresses for all participants are also provided.

There are several reasons to welcome this volume. The seminar was well planned, conducted and documented, and the book breaks a significant amount of ground on a subject amplified below.

The following topics were addressed at the seminar: (a) current trends in ambient and biological monitoring; (b) recent and potential advances in environmental and human monitoring; (c) examples of these types of monitoring; (d) contribution of the professional disciplines to protection of the worker's health; (e) quality control and good laboratory practice; and (f) education of workers, management, and representatives of these groups to work in a multidisciplinary manner.

The participants in most cases presented not only the positive aspects but also the pitfalls and serious problems that they saw. There was, for example, much debate about which type of monitoring was more relevant and whether one or both should be enlarged.

The authors and editors of this seminar proceedings made a superior effort to deal with the scientific problems inherent in the practice of referring to findings in “man” or “men” and of using the masculine pronoun for subsequent citations. Instead, a variety of noun and double-pronoun citations are used in the volume. Examples of the varieties of neutral locutions are: “...access of the worker to his or her...record...” (p. xx); “...when he/she is permitted...” (p. 6); “...women, men and future generations...” (p. 22); “carcinogenicity in humans...” (p. 34); “...he or she is employed...” (p. 57); “...part of his/her medical examination...” (p. 92); “...occupationally exposed persons...” (p. 115); “...adult male workers...” (p. 116); “...worker populations...” (p. 264); and “...training of workpeople...” (p. 598). Whatever one's choices of locutions, it is important for toxicologic, therapeutic and informational purposes that data for male and female individuals be presented as is biologically correct and done so well in this volume.

This is a particularly good rendering of an excellent seminar. As the seminar format should do, the volume pushes and pulls us to think through the issues. In this way we become drawn into the proceedings.

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